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HARFORD COUNTY OFFICE of COMMUNITY & ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Community Development Application Process and Project Selection

Harford County's program year begins July 01 and runs through June 30 of the following year. A *Public Notice* is published in the local newspapers and on the County's website around December of each year announcing the anticipated available funding and notifying nonprofits of the application process for the upcoming program year. However, funding amounts are announced and estimated based on the anticipated federal budget. The actual amounts are typically provided from HUD prior to when Harford County begins writing the Annual Action Plan. Adjustments are made to award amounts to reflect the correct formula allocation for the upcoming program year. Consideration of funding amounts will be made on a case by case basis in keeping with the intent of the requirements of the CDBG & HOME Programs and available funding.

ANNUAL PROJECT APPLICATION PROCESS

All Community Development Funds are allocated based on the review and recommendations pertaining to applications submitted to the County through a yearly funding process.

Funding provided by the process will be awarded for the upcoming fiscal year (July 1- June 30). However, no contracts/agreements for funding can be executed until OCED has executed funding agreements with HUD, which may be as late as September of the program year.

This is a competitive application process for limited funding; therefore, applications that meet all criteria are not guaranteed an award of funds and successful applications may be funded for less than the amount requested. Funding requests may be adjusted based on underwriting, subsidy layering reviews, the County's determination of the financial gap, proven market-based demand and economic growth.

Applications may be submitted during the course of the program year if no applications were received as part of the yearly funding process.

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15 South Main Street, Suite 106, Bel Air, Maryland 21014

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APPLICATION PROCESS

Applications are made available in January for the next fiscal year allocations. The applications are due in February. Applications are submitted through the OCED staff located at 15 S. Main Street Bel Air, MD 21014 where they are date and time stamped.

Agencies that are currently receiving grant funding, who are also applying for Community Development funds, must be in compliance with all terms of their current agreement(s) and must not have any outstanding audit findings, monitoring findings or concerns as determined by the County.

OCED may adjust funding requests based on underwriting, subsidy layering review, revised determination of the financial gap, revised evaluation of the OCED proportionate, share proven market-based demands and economic growth.

No work on the project may begin nor can Community Development funds be released until the environmental review process has been completed in accordance with the provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 and the related authorities listed in HUD's Regulations at 24 CFR Parts 50 and 58. If a development site is purchased or under a purchase agreement prior to or during the funding round, the purchase must not be subject to the receipt of OCED funding.

The applicant may be ineligible to be considered for funding if, in OCED's discretion, the applicant has demonstrated an untimely use of previously awarded Community Development funds. The applicant shall not exclude any organization or individual from participation under any program funded in whole or in part by Community Development funds on the grounds of age, disability, race, creed, color, national origin, familial status, religion or sex. No applicant, clients, or contractors that have been suspended or debarred under any federal program may receive Community Development funds (debarred list at <http://epls.arnet.gov>).

The application process is as follows:

Second week of December:	Public notice of availability of funds published in the local newspaper
First week of January:	Applications available from the Harford County Office of Community & Economic Development office and website
First week of February:	Completed applications due
March and April:	Application reviewed by Harford County Office of Community & Economic Development
May:	Funding recommendations are forwarded to the County Executive
June:	Decision letters sent to applicants

PROJECT SELECTION

Applications submitted will be reviewed by Harford County Office of Community & Economic Development staff that may elect to use a committee of reviewers, to ensure that all aspects of potential Community Development projects are evaluated from a multidisciplinary perspective. Recommendations on which projects to fund will be based on review and ranking of the projects and on the availability of Community Development funds.

Incomplete applications or projects that cannot meet these requirements will not be considered for Community Development funding. Instead, these applications will be withdrawn from consideration, and the applicant will be notified of areas of improvement needed in their application so that it may be resubmitted in the future if so desired by the applicant.

PROJECT APPROVAL

Once staff has completed the review and ranking, conditionally funded projects will be notified. A public hearing on the conditionally funded projects will be held in the spring. The general public, project beneficiaries and project applicants will be afforded the opportunity to speak on the recommended project list. Once HUD approves the County's Annual Action Plan, awards will be finalized.

SCORING OF GRANT APPLICATIONS

- Each application is reviewed by staff for completeness; ensuring that all requested supportive documents are submitted.
- The application review is completed by a grant review committee (GRC) composed of Harford County employees. The GRC members score each application, and discuss with the Grants staff.
- The applications are scored and then prioritized and provided to the Director of the Department who in conjunction with Harford County Administration recommends projects for funding

FUNDING PRIORITY

Funding priority will be given to projects that:

- Impact a significant number and/or percentage of low- and moderate-income persons;
- Projects that help end homelessness;
- Meet the strategic plan objectives provided in the Consolidated Plan;
- Have adequate community support, and support an identified community need;
- Maximize the use of outside funds, match and services which are coordinated with other public and private efforts;
- Established means for program evaluation and accomplishment tracking;
- Are clearly defined as to scope, location, need, budget, goals;
- Demonstrate the applicant has the capacity and the capability to carry out the project

successfully;

- Connection with employment in the community; and
- Can begin immediately and finish within the contracted time.